

July 23, 2003

Federal Communications Commission  
Attention: Commission Secretary Marlene H. Darsch  
445 12<sup>th</sup> St. SW, CY-B402  
Washington, DC 20554  
FCC Proceeding: Docket No. 03-167

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing this letter in support of SBC's application to provide long distance service in the State of Ohio.

At a forum earlier this year, Chamber members heard the results of a study conducted by the Center for Regional Economic Issues at Case Western Reserve University. Researchers found that allowing SBC to enter the long distance market in Ohio would offer many benefits, including lower telecommunications rates for businesses and consumers as well as potential job gains across the state. The study makes a compelling case in favor of SBC's long distance entry as it relates to economic growth in Ohio.

At the Chamber of Commerce, we are extremely concerned with economic development. Zanesville and Muskingum County regularly compete with areas in other states to attract new businesses here. The fact that local phone providers in at least 42 other states have already gained approval to offer long distance service, with the accompanying economic benefits, is of concern. Ohio can ill afford to be considered less progressive than other states in adopting policies that contribute to growth.

Telecommunications costs are an important part of doing business in this Information Age economy. Ohio businesses and consumers should be able to take advantage of the competitive opportunities that SBC's long distance entry will bring. It seems to me that this is a cost free economic development tool that will help the state and our region remain competitive in a rapidly changing world.

We respectfully urge the FCC to move forward with approval of SBC's entry in the long distance market.

Sincerely,

Thomas C. Poorman  
President  
Zanesville-Muskingum County Chamber of Commerce  
205 North Fifth Street  
Zanesville, Ohio 43701